



Birchcliff Bluffs United Church

Ministers: All the People – wherever and however they gather

Minister of Word & Sacrament: Rev. Dr. Ellen Redcliffe

Minister of Community Development: Rev. Carmen Llanos

Music Director: Randy Vancourt

Readers: Tricia Reid & Betty McCulloch

February 20, 2022 - Seventh Sunday after Epiphany

WE GATHER AS GOD'S PEOPLE

Prelude

Breathe on Me, Breath of God

Music by Robert Jackson

Call to Worship

Judge not that you will not be judged

For the measure you use will be used for you also.

Today we open our minds and our hearts

That we may perceive God's light as we journey together.

May we understand and accept God's ways for us.

Opening Hymn

God Who Gives to Life its Goodness

VU 260

Words: © 1970 Walter Farquharson

Music: Cyril Vincent Taylor

© 1942, 1970 Hope Publishing Co.

God who gives to life its goodness,
 God creator of all joy,
 God who gives to us our freedom,
 God who blesses tool and toy:
 teach us now to laugh and praise you,
 deep within your praises sing,
 till the whole creation dances
 for the goodness of its God.

God who fills the earth with beauty,
 God who binds each friend to friend,
 God who names us co-creators
 God who wills that chaos end:

grant us now creative spirits,
 minds responsive to your mind,
 hearts and wills your rule extending
 all our acts by Love refined.



Life & Work of the Church

Welcome to online worship. We are very happy that you have decided to worship with us here today at Birchcliff Bluffs United Church. Information about our programs and services can be found on our website at www.bbuc.ca

Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that we worship on traditional land entrusted to us but belonging to the Creator. We are called to respect history, spirituality, and culture of the Mississauga of the Credit, who came to this place long before us, and our responsibility for the treaty territory wherein our church resides. May we not take the land, its first people, and all its many gifts for granted.



Candle Lighting

We light this candle as a reminder of Christ's light given to all.
A symbol of God's presence amongst us.

Opening Prayer

Today, Lord, we need your presence with us. We are often confused by your words, our thoughts not in line with yours. Help us to expand our minds that we may be more in line with your thinking. Amen

Hymn

Make Me a Channel of Your Peace

VU 684

Words: Attributed to St. Francis
 Music: © 1968 Franciscan Communications Centre

Make me a channel of your peace:
 where there is hatred, let me bring your love;
 where there is injury, your healing power,
 and where there's doubt, true faith in you:

Make me a channel of your peace:
 where there's despair in life, let me bring hope;
 where there is darkness, only light;
 and where there's sadness, ever joy.

O Spirit, grant that I may never seek
 so much to be consoled as to console,
 to be understood as to understand,
 to be loved as to love with all my soul.

Make me a channel of your peace.
 It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
 in giving to all that we receive,
 and in dying that we're born to eternal life.

WE LISTEN FOR GOD'S WORD

Prayer of Illumination

Open our hearts to the mystery of God's word. Open our spirits to its meaning for our lives. Be with us as we listen for and receive your word today. Amen

Psalm 37:1-11; 39-40

New Revised Standard Version

- ¹ Do not fret because of the wicked;
 do not be envious of wrongdoers,
- ² for they will soon fade like the grass,
 and wither like the green herb.
- ³ Trust in the LORD, and do good;
 so you will live in the land, and enjoy security.
- ⁴ Take delight in the LORD,
 and he will give you the desires of your heart.
- ⁵ Commit your way to the LORD;
 trust in him, and he will act.
- ⁶ He will make your vindication shine like the light,
 and the justice of your cause like the noonday.
- ⁷ Be still before the LORD, and wait patiently for him;
 do not fret over those who prosper in their way,
 over those who carry out evil devices.
- ⁸ Refrain from anger, and forsake wrath.
 Do not fret—it leads only to evil.
- ⁹ For the wicked shall be cut off,
 but those who wait for the LORD shall inherit the land.
- ¹⁰ Yet a little while, and the wicked will be no more;
 though you look diligently for their place, they will not be there.

¹¹ But the meek shall inherit the land,
and delight themselves in abundant prosperity.

³⁹ The salvation of the righteous is from the LORD;
he is their refuge in the time of trouble.

⁴⁰ The LORD helps them and rescues them;
he rescues them from the wicked, and saves them,
because they take refuge in him.

Luke 6:27-38

New Revised Standard Version

²⁷ “But I say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. ²⁹ If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. ³⁰ Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. ³¹ Do to others as you would have them do to you.

³² “If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³ If you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. ³⁴ If you lend to those from whom you hope to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to receive as much again. ³⁵ But love your enemies, do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High; for God is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked. ³⁶ Be merciful, just as your God is merciful.

³⁷ “Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven; ³⁸ give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”

The word of God for the people of God. Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Hymn

Lift Every Voice and Sing

Words: James Weldon Johnson

Music: John Rosamond Johnson

Lift every voice and sing

Till earth and heaven ring
 Ring with the harmonies of Liberty
 Let our rejoicing rise
 High as the listening skies
 Let it resound loud as the rolling sea

Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us
 Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us

Facing the rising sun of our new day begun
 Let us march on till victory is won

God of our weary years
 God of our silent tears
 You who have brought us thus far on the way
 You who have, by your might
 Led us into the light
 Keep us forever in the path, we pray

Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met you
 Lest, our hearts drunk with the wine of the world, we forget you

Out from the gloomy past
 Till now we stand at last
 Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

Offering



As we consider our gifts of the spirit, we take time to think about how we might offer them back to the world. There are many ways that we can offer our gifts to this faith community and to the people in our lives.

Our time, our talents, the work of our hands, each piece works to change the world around us. Please visit our website at www.bbuc.ca/donate to learn how you can support the work of this place in this community.

Prayers of the People

What we share, O God, is offered by you. You invite all believers to take our rightful place as one of your followers as a sign and affirmation of our belonging and our becoming.

Thank you for weaving together the multihued yarns of our lives into a single tapestry, transforming us all into the design of Christ's self giving love. Amen

We now take a moment to remember those we keep in our prayers...(pause)

We ask this through Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray...



Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

BLESSING AND SENDING FORTH

Closing Hymn

Grateful

MV 182

Words and Music: © 2003 Tom Tomaszek

Grateful for the life you give us,
thankful for your Holy Son,
joyful in your Spirit flowing over all,
O God of Love.

Grateful for the Bread of Heaven,
thankful for your Holy Word,
joyful in your mercy flowing,
we will praise you.

You are more than we imagine,
Ancient, Holy, Living God.
Even when we doubt your presence
you are faithful to your Word.

Grateful for the life you give us,
thankful for your Holy Son,
joyful in your Spirit flowing over all,
O God of Love.

Grateful for the Bread of Heaven,
thankful for your Holy Word,
joyful in your mercy flowing,
we will praise you.

May our lives proclaim your justice,
may our voices sing your praise.

May our hands work in your service
to the glory of your name.

Grateful for the life you give us,
thankful for your Holy Son,
joyful in your Spirit flowing over all,
O God of Love.

Grateful for the Bread of Heaven,
thankful for your Holy Word,
joyful in your mercy flowing,
we will praise you.

Benediction & Commissioning

May the God of creation, power, strength and glory,
**Bless us all as we go bravely to face the uncertainties of life,
Knowing full well that we do not go alone.**

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Additional Lectionary Readings

Genesis 45:3–11, 15

³ Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?” But his brothers could not answer him, so dismayed were they at his presence.

⁴ Then Joseph said to his brothers, “Come closer to me.” And they came closer. He said, “I am your brother, Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. ⁵ And now do not be distressed, or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here; for God sent me before you to preserve life. ⁶ For the famine has been in the land these two years; and there are five more years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvest. ⁷ God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant on earth, and to keep alive for you many survivors. ⁸ So it was not you who sent me here, but God; he has made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house and ruler over all the land of Egypt. ⁹ Hurry and go up to my father and say to him, ‘Thus says your son Joseph, God has made me lord of all Egypt; come down to me, do not delay. ¹⁰ You shall settle in the land of Goshen, and you shall be near me, you and your children and your children’s children, as well as your flocks, your herds, and all that you have. ¹¹ I will provide for you there—since there are five more years of famine to come—so that you and your household, and all that you have, will not come to poverty.’”

¹⁵ And he kissed all his brothers and wept upon them; and after that his brothers talked with him.

James 2:1–10, (11–13), 14–17

My brothers and sisters, do you with your acts of favoritism really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ? ² For if a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes also comes in, ³ and if you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, “Have a seat here, please,” while to the one who is poor you say, “Stand there,” or, “Sit at my feet,” ⁴ have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? ⁵ Listen, my beloved brothers and sisters. Has not God chosen the poor in the world to be rich in faith and to be heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him? ⁶ But you have dishonored the poor. Is it not the rich who oppress you? Is it not they who drag you into court? ⁷ Is it not they who blaspheme the excellent name that was invoked over you?

⁸ You do well if you really fulfill the royal law according to the scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” ⁹ But if you show partiality, you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors. ¹⁰ For whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become accountable for all of it.

¹¹ For the one who said, “You shall not commit adultery,” also said, “You shall not murder.” Now if you do not commit adultery but if you murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. ¹² So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by the law of liberty. ¹³ For judgment will be without mercy to anyone who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.

¹⁴ What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill,” and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? ¹⁷ So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

Mark 7:24–37

The Syrophenician Woman’s Faith

²⁴ From there he set out and went away to the region of Tyre. He entered a house and did not want anyone to know he was there. Yet he could not escape notice, ²⁵ but a woman whose little daughter had an unclean spirit immediately heard about him, and she came and bowed down at his feet. ²⁶ Now the woman was a Gentile, of Syrophenician origin. She begged him to cast the demon out of her daughter. ²⁷ He said to her, “Let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children’s food and throw it to the dogs.” ²⁸ But she answered him, “Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children’s crumbs.” ²⁹ Then he said to her, “For saying that, you may go—the demon has left your daughter.” ³⁰ So she went home, found the child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

Jesus Cures a Deaf Man

³¹ Then he returned from the region of Tyre, and went by way of Sidon towards the Sea of Galilee, in the region of the Decapolis. ³² They brought to him a deaf man who had an impediment in his speech; and they begged him to lay his hand on him. ³³ He took him aside in private, away from the crowd, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat and touched his tongue. ³⁴ Then looking up to heaven, he sighed and said to him, “Ephphatha,” that is, “Be opened.” ³⁵ And immediately his ears were opened, his tongue was released, and he spoke plainly. ³⁶ Then Jesus ordered them to tell no one; but the more he ordered them, the more zealously they proclaimed it. ³⁷ They were astounded beyond measure, saying, “He has done everything well; he even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak.”